

**Minutes**  
**West Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Morton Community Center**  
**222 N. Chauncey Avenue**  
**West Lafayette, IN 47906**  
**May 27, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Susan Curtis, President, who presided.

Present: Peter Bunder, Kelly Busch, Susan Curtis, Philip Keller, Linda Martin, Persis Newman, Chandler Poole, Dale Dixon, Jim Sondgeroth, Arnold Sweet, Kurt Wahl

Absent: Chris Kulesza

Commissioner Curtis opened the meeting by saying thank you to the Commissioners for convening on such a short notice and outside the normal schedule. After the first hearing, she felt it was really important to get some details nailed down.

The minutes of the May 12, 2015 Historic Preservation Commission meeting were reviewed by all members. Persis Newman moved to approve the minutes. Peter Bunder seconded. The minutes were approved.

**Historic Preservation Guide Update – Katie Morrison**

Katie Morrison provided a quick sample of the guide to the Commissioners so that they may get an understanding of what she is doing. Other than adding some high-quality photographs and making final edits, the guide is complete. She intends to have the guide emailed to Commissioner Curtis and Mr. Poole by midnight on May 31, 2015. However, Ms. Morrison did review the meeting minutes from the Historic Preservation Commission hearing with Mr. Plonski and she's concerned she might need to add more or adjust the design guidelines portion of the guide.

Commissioner Busch confirmed that these guidelines are not mandates, but they're just a guide. The ordinance specifically states the specifications of historic preservation. The guide is a helpful resource for property owners to use.

Commissioner Curtis reviewed the Lafayette guide from the Wabash Valley Trust and noted that there isn't anything about landscaping in their guide. Commissioner Bunder stated that landscaping is not in the ordinance. Ms. Morrison will add language to the guide to that effect.

Commissioner Bunder suggested that someone on the Commission should have a conversation with Ryan O'Gara at the Area Plan Commission because the new land use plan which has been approved by City Council is joined by a zoning revision which is currently going through the ordinance committee in the Area Plan Commission and will be at City Council by the end of the summer. There is a third part of the land use plan with the New Chauncey plan that the Area

Plan Commission is assisting with. It is called an overlay zone and the Area Plan Commission can be more specific about streetscapes in that zone. The question of streetscapes may be beyond the Historic Plan Commission but most of the overlay zones have some reference to streetscapes. Someone from the Commission needs to begin to informally watch what's beginning to emerge with Centennial in Lafayette which will be the first overlay zone that anyone in Tippecanoe County votes on. The attempt behind the overlay is to get a fairly general look for the neighborhood. It doesn't have to be a technical conversation, someone needs to ask Mr. O'Gara how the work on the Historic Plan Commission can be compatible with the overlay zone. Commissioner Curtis suggested that it might be something that can come later down the pipe and can be added to the Guide once it is completed and online. Right now the HPC doesn't have jurisdiction over any landscaping issues. Commissioner Bunder suggests that we use this as an opportunity to suggest to property owners what they could be doing with their property. It is what the Area Plan Commission does with Planned Developments when the Area Plan Commission encourages developers to go after a certain kind of look.

Commissioner Newman noted that there is a section named "Setting" and wondered if that would have something to do with landscaping. Ms. Morrison mentioned that it has a little bit to do with landscaping if there were elements or mentions of landscaping as a general subject in how technically it should be undertaken, but there are no words about specific shrubbery or appropriate plants, it has more to do with fences, etc.

Commissioner Busch asked Mr. Poole if this was something the Historic Preservation Commission could undertake at all or if it is out of the scope of the Commission. Mr. Poole noted the commission should be careful to only enforce what is in the ordinance itself. Commissioner Busch believe that the Historic Preservation Commission has a big enough challenge to do what they've been charged with properly and efficiently. She does not recommend they take things on that aren't already in the ordinance.

Commissioner Bunder asks what the commission is willing to do in terms of education to set a tone for the look of the neighborhood. There will be a change when you'll have a conversation with people who are your neighbors or have been your neighbors. You're going to have a conversation when people come in looking for COA. There was a little bit of this when Commissioner Sondergrath was talking about color at the hearing with Mr. Plonski. The Historic Preservation Commission doesn't dictate what colors a property owner can paint their house. However, the Historic Preservation Commission can say to a property owner "it is clear that in the 20's and 30's the color palate looked something like this...and there was a certain interest in this particular style of landscaping." You can report honestly on what the place looked like in the 1920's and 1930's.

Commissioner Sondergrath believes that if the property owner were shown appropriate colorations they would be open to the idea. It could be something they have not thought about prior to the suggestion.

Commissioner Busch clarified what processes the commission would take to bring this idea to the property owner's attention. Commissioner Bunder stated that at the COA meeting, the commissioners would ask the property owner if they'd be interested in learning about era

appropriate color palates or landscape styles. This suggestion won't be in the Resource Guide, but the Commissioners will take the opportunity to chat with the applicant regarding the suggestions. Commissioner Keller asked if we could add a link regarding appropriate paint colors in the guide. Mr. Poole stated we should put a footnote after the link that states the Historic Preservation Commission does not dictate color and this is only used as a suggestion.

Commissioner Keller was curious if this guideline was being made specific for New Chauncey or are there other architectural styles that will be added to the guide such as Mid-Century Modern or Cape Cod. Ms. Morrison limited this version to only New Chauncey since that is the only historic district currently in West Lafayette. If other districts are added, the guide can be revised to add those styles.

Commissioner Curtis asked how we wanted to move forward with Ms. Morrison's work. Should the HPC have a review before posting it to the website? Mr. Poole mentioned that we agreed to send a copy to Wabash Valley Trust as soon as it was completed since we used theirs as a base. It was suggested that the final draft should be forwarded to the entire commission so that everyone has a chance to make changes prior to the meeting. After the final changes are made, the guide will be posted to the city's website. Commissioner Bunder suggested we send it to New Chauncey Housing. Commissioner Keller suggested we also put a notation in the West Lafayette newsletter mentioning who the HPC is, what the guide is and what a COA is when the guide is ready.

Commissioner Curtis asked for any other questions or comments for Ms. Morrison and none were given.

### **Discuss COA Procedure**

Commissioner Curtis asked Mr. Wahl what the procedure was in Lafayette to obtain a COA. Mr. Wahl passed around the calendar of suggested dates that were deadlines for the COA application submission and COA committee meeting. This is based off of the HPC meeting for that particular month. When the application comes in, staff needs to review the application to ensure that it is signed and all the materials that need to be attached are attached. Once that step is completed, staff will forward the documents to the entire HPC for the review of the COA meeting. The goal is to get the information to the COA committee 3-4 days before the meeting date. Commissioner Busch stated that the Commission has previously set all of those dates in the ordinance. We were being kind to Mr. Plonski by moving forward so quickly with his hearing trying to accommodate his need to obtain the COA quickly. Commissioner Curtis mentioned the failure of the trigger to notify the applicant that his house was in a historic district by multiple government entities which is why the Commission moved so quickly.

Commissioner Newman read aloud Commissioner Kulesza's question as to whether the COA committee needs to review the application prior to the full meeting. The majority of the Commission believes it is necessary. Commissioner Busch and Curtis believes that it often times won't go in front of the entire Commission.

Commissioner Bunder encouraged that as the years go past, this process will go smoother and staff will have a rhythm to it. Commissioner Keller asked about the process for applying for permits with the City. Chandler explained that they are applied for in the Engineer's office and after Mr. Plonski's incident, the Engineer's Office is hyperaware of the Historic District. Mr. Poole believes any error that took place with our first hearing was a mistake on the staff, the Commission is doing great.

Mr. Wahl suggested that the applications and the guidelines have to be online and hard copies to be available in the Department of Development.

The suggested calendar was discussed in detail. Commissioner Keller motioned to accept the calendar as long as it conforms to the established deadlines within the ordinance. Commissioner Busch seconds. Unanimous vote.

Commissioner Keller asked if the streetscaping portion of the COA application needs to be changed. Our application was mirrored Lafayette's application. Commissioner Curtis read aloud the definition of streetscape from the ordinance. Discussion was made regarding whether or not portions of the COA applications were geared toward commercial properties or residential. The commissioners asked that the COA application be slightly revised. Kelly Busch motioned to remove the section regarding streetscaping from the HPC application for the COA for West Lafayette. Commissioner Newman seconded. Commissioner Bunder stated that if you have a State Street Historic District you'll want the work streetscape included. Motion was approved 7-1.

Commissioner Keller motioned that the form be rearranged to be better suited for the mandate of the Commission. Commissioner Curtis suggested that this form be kicked back to the original committee that created it and come back to the Commission with a new form at the next meeting. It will be easier for the Commission to move to approve the form rather than try to revise it via motion. Commissioner Keller and Amanda Ray will work on making changes to the form and will present those changes at the next meeting.

### **Website information/process**

Ms. Ray spoke regarding what the process was to make the HPC information available to the public. Ms. Ray will work with the Mayor's assistant in order to create a tab on the city's website under the Department of Development.

### **Other**

Commissioner Bunder suggested that Rick Walker from the neighborhood resource team attend the next meeting. The reason why Mr. Plonski's case came to the HPC because Commissioner Bunder can see it outside of his kitchen window. The only people who go around the neighborhood regularly are the NRT. This becomes more important a year from now when reconstruction of properties may or may not take place after filing a COA application. If we can share with Mr. Walker what the HPC is up to, he can come up with a plan over the next year so that the people who work for him understand what is going on with this district. The

Commissioners think this is a great idea. Commissioner Curtis mentioned sending an application to every property owner in the district so that they are aware of the changes. Commissioner Bunder suggested we send a letter inviting the property owners to a meet and greet so that they can tell the property owners what the HPC is about and what they plan to do. Commissioner Curtis suggested this be revisited that when the application and the resource guide are completed and the calendar posted.

Commissioner Busch suggested we find the major property management firms in the district. The applicant hid behind his property management company to say that everything was in a state severe disrepair because of his management company. The Commissioners agreed.

The September 8 meeting conflicts with a council meeting. The HPC meeting for that date was rescheduled to Wednesday, September 9 at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Bunder suggested an agenda deadline. Ms. Ray attempts to get the agenda and documents out the Friday before a meeting. Commissioner Curtis suggested for Tuesday meetings the Commissioners have agenda items to Ms. Ray the Thursday before the Tuesday meeting.

Commissioner Newman moved to adjourn. Commissioner Busch Seconded. Unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

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Linda Martin, Secretary